

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF  
RIVERSIDE

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

# Joint Legislative Audit Committee

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May 1, 1973

Honorable Willie L. Brown, Jr.  
Chairman, Assembly Committee on  
Ways and Means  
Room 319, State Capitol  
Sacramento, California

Dear Willie:

Transmitted herewith is a report on the California School for the Deaf at Riverside. The report provides the information requested by your committee and is summarized as follows:

- Temporary facilities for 100 additional multihandicapped deaf students could be installed on land presently owned by the school.
- It would cost \$900,000 annually to lease needed facilities and provide services for the 100 students. In addition, an unknown amount would be needed for improvement of the existing cafeteria.
- The extent of the unmet needs of the multihandicapped deaf children in the state has not been determined. Estimates of the number of multihandicapped deaf children in the state whose needs are not being served vary from 550 to 1,650.
- A \$450,000 appropriation for the 1972-73 fiscal year to provide services for 50 multihandicapped deaf pupils will be expended by June 30, 1973. As of March 20, 1973, no multihandicapped pupils had been admitted. The unit is expected to be opened in April 1973. If the 50 pupils are admitted in April, they will receive about three months of services for the \$450,000 appropriation which was budgeted to fund a full school year.

Honorable Willie L. Brown, Jr.

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- The duties and responsibilities of the school's administrative personnel have not changed significantly over the past several years. The school has added five administrative personnel for the multihandicapped deaf school.
- The number and mix of students attending the school has not changed significantly over the past several years. Future increases in pupil enrollment in the secondary school programs are planned to be offset by decreases in the elementary enrollment. It is anticipated that there will be an overall increase in the number of multihandicapped deaf pupils.
- The school's admission policy is not in compliance with the Committee on Conference directive for the 1972-73 budget. However, it is in compliance with the Education Code which, according to the Legislative Counsel, should be followed. The school's admission policy will eventually result in a pupil mix in accordance with the intent of the Committee on Conference directive.
- There is no evidence that the top management of the school has been engaged in any activities not directly related to their duties. Nor has the state directly or indirectly supported any individual's personal activities.

It is recommended that the extent of the unmet needs of the multihandicapped deaf be determined by the Department of Education.

Sincerely,



VINCENT THOMAS, Chairman  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

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REPORT ON CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF  
RIVERSIDE

The State of California provides a residential and educational program to approximately 1,100 deaf minors through two special schools. The School for the Deaf at Berkeley, serving the northern portion of the state, was founded in 1860. The facility serving the southern portion of the state, located in Riverside, was founded in 1953 to relieve increasing enrollment demands on the northern school.

The Riverside school has a 1973-74 projected enrollment of 650 pupils, of which 110 are multihandicapped deaf. Related operating costs are projected at \$4,459,338 of which 90 percent is supported by the state's General Fund and ten percent is from local school districts.

In order to provide space for multihandicapped deaf pupils, the Legislative Analyst has recommended that (1) deaf students enrolled at the schools for the deaf be returned to local deaf programs if such programs are within commuting distance of the student's home, and (2) submit a report on the progress of the recommendation to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

The Department of Education responded that they were complying with the amended Education Code priorities in granting new admissions to the schools. However, they did not believe that students once enrolled in the schools should be required to return to their local schools.

The Committee on Conference on the 1972-73 Budget recommended that beginning in the 1973-74 school year, first priority for admission at the

California School for the Deaf, Riverside shall be given to severely multi-handicapped deaf students. Our report on certain questions that have come up pursuant to the conference committee's recommendation are as follows.

ARE THERE ANY APPARENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
INCREASING SERVICES FOR THE MULTIHANDICAPPED  
DEAF AT RIVERSIDE WITHOUT PROPORTIONAL  
INCREASES IN COSTS?

Cost of Additional Services

Services and temporary facilities for approximately 100 additional multihandicapped deaf could be provided on land now owned by the school. The additional facilities would compliment the "open space" atmosphere of the school. Annual operating costs including leasing temporary facilities for an additional 100 multihandicapped deaf pupils would be approximately \$900,000, which is an increase proportional to the cost of the temporary facilities currently under construction for 50 pupils. Additional construction costs would be necessary for an addition to the cafeteria.

The CSDR has no plan to expand its facilities for the multihandicapped deaf unit. Additional space in the regular unit, from an expected decline in elementary enrollment, will be offset by additional enrollment in the secondary school. The 1973-74 school enrollment for the elementary schools is expected to decline from the present 195 to approximately 140 pupils. Junior high school will be moved into one wing of the elementary school to meet the additional secondary enrollment. By 1974-75 and thereafter, elementary enrollment is anticipated for around 110-115 to be housed and schooled entirely in the lower school facilities. The present elementary school will be converted

entirely to secondary educational uses. Composition of the 110-115 permanent elementary enrollment are expected to be approximately 50 percent multihandicapped deaf and 50 percent deaf only special cases where the pupil cannot receive suitable environment and/or education in the area of his residence.

#### Unmet Needs of Multihandicapped Deaf

The extent of the unmet needs of the multihandicapped deaf in California has not been established. A report on a study made in the Spring of 1968 for the Department of Education estimates the number of multihandicapped deaf children under age 15 at 1,732. Of that total, 984 children were identified and reported and 748 were estimated and reported. The estimate of 1,732 children, if correct, and if the children were still in the state, should compose the 1973 school age population of multihandicapped deaf children being between the ages of five and twenty.

A Department of Education report identified 1,281 multihandicapped deaf pupils that were enrolled in 1970-71 special classes in California public schools. The same year, 381 multihandicapped deaf pupils were enrolled in the state schools for the deaf, bringing the 1970-71 total to 1,662. Another Department of Education report to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee reported the known population of multihandicapped deaf children in the state as 764, in November 1970.

Dr. Richard Brill, Superintendent of the Multihandicapped Unit, California School for the Deaf, Riverside, stated that he felt the needs of the state's multihandicapped deaf children would be met when the facilities for an additional 50 students are completed in April 1973. As of February 26, 1973,

he stated only 40 applications had been received for the 50 openings. Direct solicitation of the local schools was used to obtain 34 of the applicants, the remaining six were found in state hospitals.

Julius C. Spizzirri, Southern California consultant in education of the deaf and hard of hearing and Carl Kirshner, consultant for the multihandicapped for Southern California, said the unmet needs of the multihandicapped deaf cannot be determined. Mr. Spizzirri said it was impossible to determine the number of multihandicapped deaf pupils enrolled in local schools, let alone isolate those with unmet needs. Mr. Kirshner estimated that from 550 to 1,650 multihandicapped deaf children were not being adequately served by the local schools. His estimate is that ten percent to thirty percent of the state's enrolled deaf pupils are multihandicapped deaf children. However, he reiterated that accurate figures of the state's population of multihandicapped deaf in the local schools could not be obtained because of differing standards applied by the local districts, plus the fact that the evaluation and classification of multihandicapped deaf is frequently made by a classroom teacher, unqualified to make such judgements.

Local school districts do not receive any special education funds specifically for multihandicapped deaf classes.

Robert Lennan, Assistant Superintendent of the California School for the Deaf, Riverside, stated that local school districts generally cannot serve the needs of the multihandicapped deaf pupil because of a lack of funding. Local districts are restricted by state funding to 6:1 pupil-teacher ratios for children of 3 through 6 years and 8:1 ratios for children of ages 9 through 12 years. The pupil-teacher ratio for the multihandicapped deaf served at



California School for the Deaf, Riverside is 4:1. Many multihandicapped children require much lower ratios, some one to one, in order to benefit from an educational program. At Riverside school, instruction for the multihandicapped deaf is frequently on a 1:1 ratio with new pupils for the first six to eight weeks. This is just to establish eye contact and basic communication with the pupil. As the student progresses, the ratio changes toward the optimum ratio of 4:1.

Our discussions with administrative personnel at the Riverside School for the Deaf and at the Department of Education and with several state consultants indicate that there undoubtedly is an unmet need in providing adequate educational services to the multihandicapped deaf children in the state.

It is difficult to understand why the Department of Education has not determined a better measure of the extent of the unmet needs of the multihandicapped deaf in view of the Legislature's expressed concern for that group.

#### Use of New Facilities

Funds for the additional multihandicapped deaf facilities at the Riverside School for the Deaf were appropriated for the 1972-73 fiscal year. Fifteen instructional staff were hired effective September 1, 1972. Contracts for the lease of the classrooms were dated October 16, 1972, with occupancy set for March 1, 1973. Notice of the new facilities for the multihandicapped deaf were not sent out by the school until December 1972. As of March 1973, only 40 out of the added 50-pupil accommodations had been filled.

The school scheduled the opening of the new multihandicapped deaf facilities for January 1973. The opening date is now set for April 1973. By the end of 1972-73 fiscal year, most of the \$450,000 appropriated will be expended. For this the 50 pupils will receive about three months of services instead of the full school year.

#### RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the extent of the unmet needs of the multi-handicapped deaf be determined by the Department of Education.

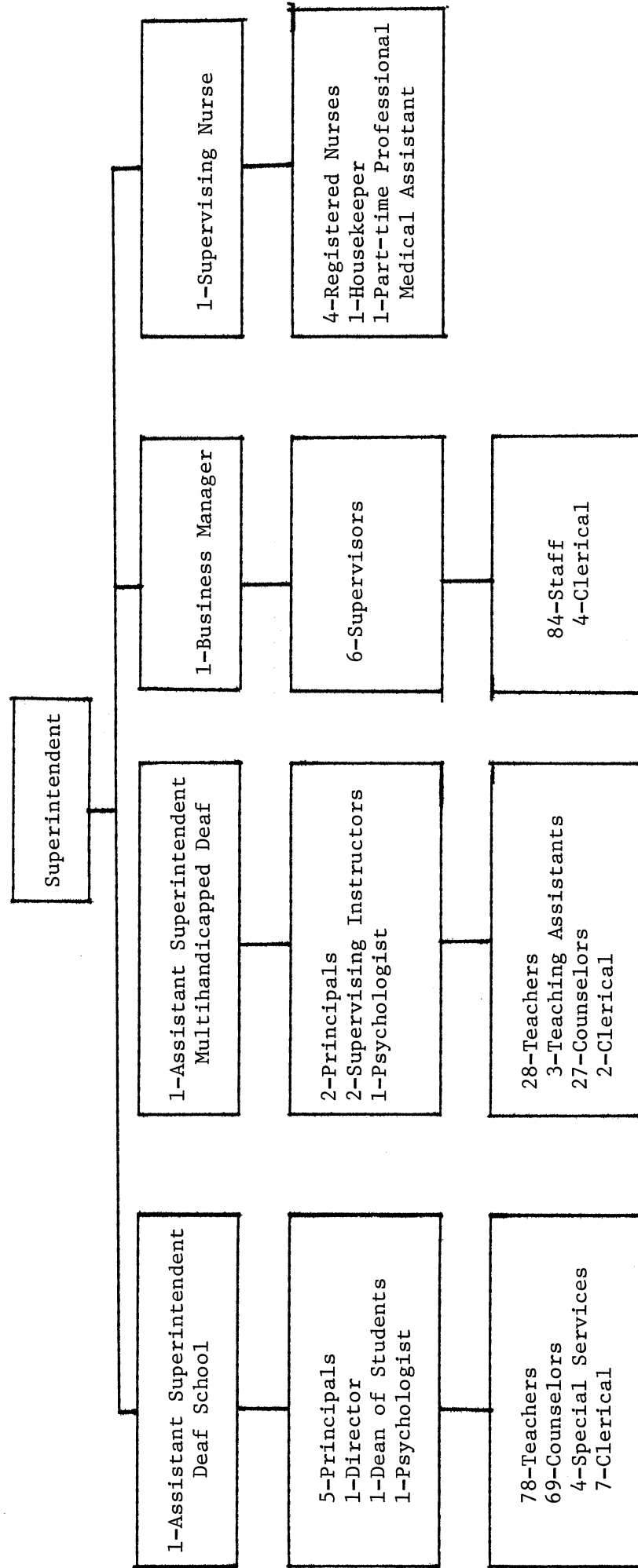
Before seeking additional funds, the number of multihandicapped deaf children in the state with unmet needs should be determined. Surveys of local districts, state hospitals and private schools should be made to identify any deaf pupils who are not having their educational needs fully met. Each child identified should be evaluated to ascertain the child's needs. A determination should be made of where the individual needs of the child could be best served. Armed with such information, the state schools for the deaf would be able to meet the needs of the state's multihandicapped deaf children population.

WHAT IS THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE  
OF THE SCHOOL AND WHAT ARE THE DUTIES  
AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
PERSONNEL? HOW HAVE THEY CHANGED OVER  
THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS?

The Riverside school is divided into two units: a deaf and a multi-handicapped deaf unit. The deaf unit services the deaf only and moderate to

serious multihandicapped deaf. The multihandicapped deaf unit services severely multihandicapped deaf pupils. Five principals administer the lower, elementary, junior high school, high school and vocational programs under the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the deaf unit. Two principals are under the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the multihandicapped deaf unit. The Superintendent is responsible for the over-all direction of the school. The organization structure of the school is shown on the following page.

California School For The Deaf - Riverside  
 Organization Chart  
1972-73



The organization chart identifies the areas of responsibility for the school's administrative personnel and the number of school personnel directly supervised.

The superintendent of the school informed us that the duties of the school's top administrative personnel have remained unchanged over the past several years. Additional administrative personnel were hired for the multihandicapped deaf unit, therefore, no administrative duties were added onto the existing top administrative personnel.

HOW HAVE THE NUMBER AND MIX OF STUDENTS  
CHANGED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS?

The total number of students at CSDR has not changed significantly over the past several years. The student mix has changed to include more multihandicapped deaf and secondary school-age deaf students. The number of deaf-only and elementary-age deaf students has declined. Table 1 shows the enrollment of the deaf-only school and the multihandicapped-deaf school for the past several years.

Table 1

California School for the Deaf - Riverside  
Enrollment  
As of January 1971, 1972 and 1973

<u>Deaf Unit</u>	<u>January 1971</u>	<u>January 1972</u>	<u>January 1973</u>
Elementary School	266	207	186
Secondary School	<u>291</u>	<u>317</u>	<u>324</u>
Sub-Total Regular Unit	557	524	510
Multihandicapped Deaf Unit	<u>61</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>64</u>
CSDR Total	<u>618</u>	<u>585</u>	<u>574</u>

IS THE SCHOOL IN COMPLIANCE WITH  
DIRECTIONS FROM THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE  
ON THE 1972-73 BUDGET WITH RESPECT TO ADMISSIONS?

Finding

The Committee on Conference made the following recommendation on  
Item 264, Department of Education - Special Schools, for the 1972-73 budget:

"It is recommended that:

"Beginning in the 1973-74 school year, first priority for admission to the California School for the Deaf, Riverside, shall be given to severely multihandicapped deaf students. No deaf but otherwise normal student shall be admitted to the California Schools for the Deaf whose home is within commuting distance of a program which is adequate for the student's need and is comparable to the programs of the California Schools for the Deaf.

"The Department of Education be directed to (1) serve at the Schools for the Deaf as of January 1, 1975 only those students whose home is not within commuting distance of a program which is adequate for the student's need and is comparable to the programs of the California Schools for

the Deaf, and (2) submit a report on the progress of this policy to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee by November 1, 1974."

The current standards for admission to the state's schools for the deaf are defined in a "Special Education Memorandum", dated January 2, 1973. The memorandum is from the Department of Education and generally follows the admission standards set by Section 25601, Education Code.

The memorandum identified the following pupils as eligible for enrollment in the California Schools for the Deaf:

"Within the legislated guidelines, the following pupils are eligible for enrollment in the California Schools for the Deaf:

Every deaf minor between the ages of 3 and 21 years, of suitable capacity, who is a resident of the state, who:

1. is of elementary school age and is unable to be served in a district or county program because of distance to the program from his residence, or
2. is of elementary school age and whose educational needs cannot be met by a district or county program, or
3. is of elementary school age and whose district or county program is not comparable to that provided by the California School for the Deaf, of
4. is of secondary school age (13.0) who requires a comprehensive secondary educational program designed for deaf students.

Priority admission shall be given for eligible severely multi-handicapped deaf pupils in the Multihandicapped Unit at the California School for the Deaf (Riverside only)."

Because of the inconsistency between the Committee on Conference's directive and the Department of Education memorandum, which is based on Section 25601 of the Education Code, we requested the Office of Legislative Counsel to determine if the conference committee directive has priority over Section 25601. The significant part of the opinion is quoted below:

"As can be seen, Section 25601 establishes two priorities for admission to each school. The supplementary report, on the other hand, specifies a considerably different system of priorities. The report purports to differentiate between the Riverside School and the Berkeley School, and further purports to specify that only pupils who do not live within commuting distance of an adequate program may be admitted to the schools. Thus, the language in the supplementary report is in conflict with current law.

"Secondly, we think that it is clear that insofar as the statute and the report vary, the statute must be followed by those charged with the duty of admitting pupils to the school. The report was not voted upon by either house of the Legislature and is not law. The administrators may follow the report to the extent that it is not inconsistent with the statute, but such action would be entirely discretionary on their part.

"Thus, under current law, the first priority of admission to both of the state schools for the deaf must be given to elementary age, deaf minors residing in sparsely populated regions where appropriate educational facilities and services are not available or cannot reasonably be provided, and the second priority must be given to secondary age deaf minors in need of a high school program."

#### Actual Admission Practices

Discussions with the Superintendent of the Riverside School for the Deaf concerning the school's actual admission practices disclosed that admission priority is given to elementary-age pupils which attended the school in the previous year. Secondary-age pupils are admitted under a Department of



Education directed "open door" policy with the exception of pupils from districts served by SELACO (a junior and senior high school in Downey serving 17 school districts in Southeast Los Angeles) or those pupils who can successfully benefit from attending a local school with hearing students.

The Superintendent concluded that the school's admission priorities, while at variance with the conference committee's directive by giving priority consideration to retaining students once enrolled through to high school graduation, will lead in the future to a pupil mix of multihandicapped, secondary and elementary in accordance with the intent of the conference committee directive.

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE TOP MANAGEMENT  
OF THE SCHOOL BEEN ENGAGED IN SPEECHES,  
CONFERENCES, AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES NOT  
DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR PRIMARY DUTIES  
AND TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE STATE DIRECTLY  
OR INDIRECTLY PAID FOR THOSE ACTIVITIES?

We found no evidence that top management has been involved in any activities not directly related to their duties. Communications with the Superintendent and a review of travel vouchers for the period July 1971, through November 1972, revealed no irregularities.

The school's superintendent reported a total of approximately 30 days of vacation and holiday time off for 1972, some of which was used by him to participate as a consultant to other educational institutions outside of the state. However, there is no evidence that his activities were directly or indirectly paid for by the state.



Walter J. Quinn  
Acting Deputy Auditor General

April 18, 1973

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